

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSM-03 SAA-01 AF-10 ARA-10

EA-10 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2604

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 02964

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y-SECTION INFORMATION DELETED

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, UNGA, UNSC, IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELI PERMREP HERZOG'S VIEWS ON UN AND MIDDLE

EAST ISSUES

1. ON THE EVE OF THE CONCLUSION OF HIS THREE-YEAR TERM AS ISRAELI UN PERMREP, AT END OF THIS MONTH, AMBASSADOR HERZOG DISCUSSED WITH MISOFF ON JULY 19 HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE CHANGING ATTITUDES AT THE UN TOWARDS ISRAEL AS WELL AS OTHER TOPICS INCLUDING UNIFIL, EGYPTIAN/ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS, ISRAELI DOMESTIC POLITICS, AND HIS OWN PLANS. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONVERSATION.

2. ISRAEL AT THE UN. HERZOG BELIEVES THAT THE POLITICAL CLIMATE TOWARDS ISRAEL AT THE UN HAS IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY SINCE 1975. AT THAT TIME, HE RECALLED, ISRAEL WAS
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CONFRONTED BOTH WITH THE ZIONISM/RACISM RESOLUTION AND THE EFFORT OF THE RADICAL ARABS TO TRY TO OUST ISRAEL FROM THE UN. NEITHER OF THESE ISSUES IS NOW ON THE AGENDA. IN GENERAL, HERZOG CONTINUED, THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HAS UNDERESTIMATED THE POTENTIAL VALUE OF THE UN AS A FORUM FOR REACHING INTERNATIONAL OPINION. IT IS HIS VIEW THAT THE ISRAELI UN MISSION SHOULD BE

STRENGTHENED WHEREAS, IN FACT, IT HAS BEEN CUT BACK IN THE LAST YEARS.

3. HERZOG, UNSURPRISINGLY, TOOK CREDIT FOR MUCH OF WHAT HE CHARACTERIZED AS THE IMPROVEMENT, AT LEAST ON A RELATIVE BASIS, IN ATTITUDES TOWARD ISRAEL DURING HIS TERM HERE. IT HAD BEEN HIS POLICY, HE SAID, TO AVOID ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE AND ALSO NOT TO APPEAR IN PERSON IN ANY OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR THE RENEWALS OF UNEF AND UNDOF. HERZOG SAID HE WOULD BE MEETING WITH HIS SUCCESSOR, YEHUDA BLUM, IN ISRAEL EARLY NEXT MONTH BEFORE THE LATTER DEPARTS FOR NEW YORK AND WOULD BE SUGGESTING THAT BLUM ADOPT THE SAME LOW-KEY APPROACH.

4. ASSESSMENT OF UNIFIL. HERZOG BELIEVES THAT UNIFIL HAS PROVEN ITSELF TO BE A SUCCESS AND THAT IT IS NOW THE POLICY OF THE GOI TO SUPPORT IT. IN REPLY TO MISOFF'S OBSERVATION THAT UNIFIL WAS NOT SEEN BY ARABS AS TREATING PALESTINIANS AND CHRISTIANS IN THE SAME WAY, AND THAT THIS COULD CREATE SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR RENEWAL OF ITS MANDATE HERZOG SAID IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT UNIFIL AND CHRISTIAN MILITIAS NOW WERE ENGAGED IN TRYING TO WORK OUT VIABLE UNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT THEIR RELATIONSHIP. HE INDICATED THAT HE WOULD BE DISCUSSING UNIFIL ISSUES WITH WEIZMAN UPON HIS RETURN TO ISRAEL.
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5. EGYPTIAN/ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS. HERZOG SAID HE IS CONVINCED THAT SADAT GENUINELY WANTS TO CONCLUDE AN AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL AND THAT, DESPITE CURRENT DIFFICULTIES, AN AGREEMENT WILL BE REACHED. HE CRITICIZED THE INVOLVEMENT OF ROSENNE AND BARAK IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS, CLAIMING IT WAS A SIGN OF INSECURITY THAT BEGIN AND DAYAN FELT THE NEED TO TAKE THEIR LAWYERS TO ALL THESE MEETINGS. SADAT, HE CONTINUED, WAS SEEKING TO ESTABLISH AGREEMENT ON BROAD PRINCIPLES WHEREAS THE ISRAELI APPROACH FOCUSED IMMEDIATELY ON THE DETAILS. THESE COULD COME LATER. HERZOG GIVES SADAT THE CREDIT FOR TAKING THE INITIATIVE TO GET NEGOTIATIONS GOING AGAIN, THROUGH HIS JERUSALEM VISIT.

6. ISRAELI DOMESTIC POLITICS. THE IN-FIGHTING BETWEEN DAYAN AND WEIZMAN, HERZOG BELIEVES, WILL CONTINUE. RECALLING HIS WELL-KNOWN RESERVATIONS ABOUT DAYAN, HE CRITICIZED HIM FOR REFUSING TO INVOLVE HIMSELF WITH THE LEBANESE SITUATION AND FOR HIS QUIXOTIC AND UNPREDICTABLE TEMPERAMENT, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING HE REMAINED INFLUENTIAL WITH BEGIN IN FORMULATING GOI POLICY IN THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS. IN CONTRAST, HERZOG EXPRESSED

ADMIRATION FOR WEIZMAN'S PERFORMANCE, INCLUDING HIS WORK IN IMPROVING RELATIONS BETWEEN MILGOV AND WEST BANKERS. HERZOG SAID HE ANTICIPATES THE COALITION MAY COLLAPSE WITHIN A YEAR MAINLY BECAUSE OF ITS POOR PERFORMANCE ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES. IN FOREIGN POLICY, BEGIN REMAINS POPULAR.

7. PLANS. HERZOG WILL RESUME HIS LAW PRACTICE IN TEL AVIV, IS CONSIDERING CONTRACTS FOR THREE BOOKS, AND PLANS TO WRITE POLITICAL COMMENTARIES FOR ONE OR MORE ISRAELI NEWSPAPERS. AS REGARDS HIS POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS, HE INDICATED THAT HE WOULD BE EVALUATING THE SITUATION IN THE LABOR PARTY UPON HIS RETURN AND IMPLIED THAT HE WOULD BE SEEKING AN ACTIVE ROLE IN ISRAELI POLITICS. MCHENRY
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